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Road to Destruction

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In August an amazing hard music festival took place in Camden Town, London. Rob Schellert was there and reports on DESTRUCTION FEST 2003.

In the Underworld club in Camden Town in August something revolutionary stirred. The second celebration of metal, hardcore and punk, Destruction Fest took place and the fans who journeyed there from all over Europe had a unique chance to see Christian and non-Christian bands playing side by side and breaking down all kinds of barriers.



The first day of the fest had a more of a punk and hardcore focus. Opening up the fest was Cain's Mark. They played original and well written emo rock songs. Next up was highly acclaimed Zedisforzebra whose melodic, infectious punk rock songs about heartbreak went down well with the crowd. They played a great energetic set while being really funny between the songs. Zedisforzebra set the stage for Careless. Thrashy punk rock was their game as the singer was larger than life. German outfit Today Forever came up next. They played an intense, tight hardcore set and despite technical difficulties, got the floor moving in a full-on mosh pit. Headlining the first night was Zyllah. They played an amazing heart-filled hardcore set with their Converge/Will Haven-influenced songs. The band has a bright future and lots of potential. They deserve a chance to be heard.

The cool things about Destruction Fest are the meetings which take place over the weekend. It is a good chance for like minded people into heavy music to come together to hang out, worship together and be encouraged in their walk with God. The first meeting of the weekend took place on the Saturday morning. It started with metal worship led by some of the people at the fest's organisers Glorious Undead Church. It was a beautiful time of worship as people soaked in the presence of God. It was then followed by a question and answer session with Extol, the band headlining the weekend. It was a chance to get to know the guys in the band more. Their answers revealed what it is like to be in a band like Extol who are getting bigger every day, how their faith plays in their music and their everyday life. The guest speaker for this year's fest was Morten Holmqvist, pastor of Subchurch of Oslo, Norway (alternative rock'n'roll church like Glorious Undead Church). He gave a stirring message about the need to share the Gospel and live it out in our everyday life.

Saturday night was a night to remember. Opening up the evening was new band Decarsus, a London-based metalcore band. They played well despite the hardships of being the first band on stage for the evening. The much talked about Last Hours Of Torment came up next, showing everybody their skills with their style of melodic deathcore. They played a few new songs which showed the band becoming more technical and more diverse in their music. Extreme metal band Bloodwork followed Last Hours Of Torment's trail and continued the onslaught of metal. Their new material shows the band progressing and becoming a tighter unit. All the way from Brazil, Antidemon was the surprise band of this year's fest. Nobody really knew what to expect from this death grindcore band. They unleashed their Sepultura-esque sound and won the crowd over towards the end of their set. Up next, Norwegian black metallers Frosthadr gave us a taste of

Scandinavian metal. They played an intense set with their brutal songs, leaving everyone half deaf. Headlining this year's fest was thrash death metallers Extol from Norway, playing their first ever UK gig. They just released 'Synergy' out on Century Media. This was the moment everyone was waiting for during the weekend. They blew everyone away as they opened up with "Grace For Succession" from the new album. Their set consisted of songs mostly from their new album with a few songs from their older albums thrown in here and there. It was good music to the ears and before we knew it, it was all over.

Destruction Fest 2003 ended with a meeting at Glorious Undead Church which meets at Hawley Arms Pub (an ex-Hell's Angels hangout) in Camden Town. Originally, the idea was to have a full band leading in metal worship, the idea quickly switched to having acoustic guitar worship as people packed the pub out making the idea of having a full band impossible. It was the perfect way to end the weekend. Like minded people packed out in a pub with one heart - worshipping Jesus. It was bitter sweet as everyone knew that this was the last meeting for the weekend. Morten, the guest speaker spoke about what it means to be Church and being real with each other. A memorable close to an amazing weekend. ☒

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